



DOI: [10.24014/jush.v33i1.36105](https://doi.org/10.24014/jush.v33i1.36105)

p-ISSN: 1412-0909

e-ISSN: 2407-8247

Available online at website: <https://ejournal.uin-suska.ac.id/index.php/ushuluddin>

Mazahib Al-Tafsir: An Axiological And Ontological-Epistemological Investigation In The Context Of Qur'anic Interpretation

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Article Information

Received: March 07, 2025

Revised: April 14, 2025

Available online: June 01, 2025

Published regularly: June 2025

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Keywords

*Mazahib al-Tafsir, Ontology,
Epistemology, Axiology*

Abstract

The diversity of Qur'ānic interpretations often leads to disputes among Muslims. Therefore, critical evaluation and tolerance are essential to avoid exclusive truth claims and subjective biases, as well as to promote a moderate understanding of the Qur'an. The purpose of this study is to examine the ontological, epistemological, and axiological aspects of mazahib al-Tafsir. It is hoped that common ground and consensus can be established in understanding the teachings of the Qur'an, thereby strengthening ukhuwah Islamiyah and preventing divisions among Muslims. This research employs a descriptive-analytical method to explore the development of mazahib al-Tafsir from classical to contemporary times. Data were collected through a literature review of Tafsir texts and related scholarly works. The findings indicate that, ontologically, mazahib al-Tafsir are schools of Qur'anic interpretation that emerge from the differing backgrounds, understandings, and methodologies of mufasssirs. Epistemologically, the evolution of mazahib al-Tafsir is influenced by both internal factors (such as language, politics, and theology) and external factors (including other civilizations and scientific advancements). This has led to the emergence of various styles of tafsir (bil Ma'tsur, bir Ra'yi, and scientific) as efforts to understand and apply the Qur'an in a dynamic context. The axiology of mazahib al-Tafsir aims to avoid the sacralization of religious thought, to comprehend the evolution of Qur'anic interpretation, and to appreciate the plurality of interpretations. Reason: Improved clarity, vocabulary, and technical accuracy while maintaining the original meaning.

Kata Kunci

*Mazahib al-Tafsir, Ontologi,
Epistemologi, Aksiologi.*

Abstrak

Keragaman penafsiran Al-Qur'an sering kali menimbulkan perselisihan di antara umat Islam. Oleh karena itu, evaluasi kritis dan toleransi sangat penting untuk menghindari klaim

kebenaran eksklusif dan bias subjektif, serta untuk mempromosikan pemahaman yang moderat terhadap Al-Qur'an. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji aspek ontologis, epistemologis, dan aksiologis dari mazahib al-Tafsir. Diharapkan dapat ditemukan titik temu dan konsensus dalam memahami ajaran-ajaran al-Qur'an, sehingga dapat memperkuat ukhuwah Islamiyah dan mencegah perpecahan di kalangan umat Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis untuk mengeksplorasi perkembangan mazahib al-Tafsir dari masa klasik hingga kontemporer. Data dikumpulkan melalui kajian literatur terhadap teks-teks tafsir dan karya-karya ilmiah terkait. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa, secara ontologis, mazahib al-Tafsir merupakan aliran-aliran penafsiran Alquran yang muncul dari latar belakang, pemahaman, dan metodologi yang berbeda dari para mufassir. Secara epistemologis, evolusi mazahib al-Tafsir dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal (seperti bahasa, politik, dan teologi) dan faktor eksternal (termasuk peradaban lain dan kemajuan ilmu pengetahuan). Hal ini menyebabkan munculnya berbagai macam corak tafsir (bil Ma'tsur, bir Ra'yi, dan ilmiah) sebagai upaya untuk memahami dan mengaplikasikan Al-Qur'an dalam konteks yang dinamis. Aksiologi mazahib al-Tafsir bertujuan untuk menghindari sakralisasi pemikiran keagamaan, memahami evolusi penafsiran Al-Qur'an, dan mengapresiasi pluralitas penafsiran. Alasan: Meningkatkan kejelasan, kosakata, dan akurasi teknis dengan tetap mempertahankan makna aslinya

Introduction

The issues concerning the diversity of Qur'ānic exegesis stem from the expertise and social backgrounds of the mufasssirin,¹ The methodology and approach to interpretation are influenced by various factors. It is essential to recognize the richness of Qur'ānic thought and to avoid making exclusive truth claims.² In addition, subjectivity in interpretation can lead to bias, highlighting the necessity for critical evaluation of the various madhhabs. Studying the madzahib al-tafsir is also crucial to prevent the sanctification of individual interpretations, as interpretation is inherently relative. Therefore, promoting tolerance and moderation in understanding the Qur'an is essential, particularly in addressing the contemporary challenges of extremism and intolerance.³

¹ Sja'roni, "Madzahib al-Tafsir in the Perspective of Qur'anic Studies" (n.d.), accessed February 9, 2025, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234800335.pdf>.

² Wildah Nurul Islami, "The Essence and Significance of Madzhabi Tafsir Studies for Muslim Academics in *Risda: Journal of Islamic Thought and Education* 6, no. 1 (April 7, 2022): 17–34.

³ hardivizon, Busra Febriyarni, And Hasep Saputra, *Mazahib At-Tafsir* (Curup-Rejang Lebong: Lp2 Iain Curup, 2019), Accessed February 8, 2025, <https://Isbn.Perpusnas.Go.Id/Account/Searchbuku?Searchtxt=Mazahib+At-Tafsir&Searchcat=Judul>.

Madhahib al-Tafsir examines Qur'anic interpretation through ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions. This study aims to explore various interpretive approaches, offering insights into the richness of tafsir. Ontologically, madhahib al-tafsir reflects the diverse thoughts generated by scholars over time, characterized by ijtihad. Understanding the historical development of these madhahib is crucial for mapping existing trends in interpretation.⁴ This research will explore the ontological, epistemological, and axiological aspects of madhahib al-tafsir within the context of tafsir.

Although previous studies have examined ontology, epistemology, and axiology within the context of various Islamic disciplines,⁵ There remains a significant gap in the comprehensive understanding of the interaction among the three dimensions—ontology, epistemology, and axiology—in the study of Mazahib al-Tafsir. To date, no research has thoroughly examined these three dimensions in relation to Mazahib al-Tafsir. Many existing studies tend to focus on a single aspect, such as ontology or epistemology, without considering the integration of these dimensions in Qur'anic interpretation.

Furthermore, there is a notable lack of critical evaluation regarding the subjectivity and biases that may arise from the social backgrounds of the mufasirs,⁶ also highlights the necessity for more comprehensive research. This study will aim to bridge the gap by examining the relationship between ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives within the context of Qur'anic interpretation. Additionally, it will offer deeper insights into tolerance and moderation in interpretive understanding, particularly in light of the current challenges posed by extremism and intolerance.

The importance of this research attracts several experts to analyze and explore ontological, epistemological, and axiological aspects with various subjects. For example, the research conducted by Siti Jaroyatun Ni'mah et al. titled "Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology of Islamic Educational Philosophy: An Introduction,"⁷ Riky Supratama et al., "Islam as a Science: Ontology, Epistemology, and Ethics,"⁸ Mas'ud Zein, "Axiology in the Integration of Knowledge, Islam, and Science,"⁹ Suria Anisah and Fadhli Ramadhan, "Analysis of Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology in Balaghah Science in Arabic: A Study of the Philosophy of Science,"¹⁰ Sja'roni, "Madzahibut

⁴ Nurul Islami, "The Essence and Significance of Madzhabi Tafsir Studies for Muslim Academics."

⁵ Budi Afriandi et al., "Objects of Study in the Philosophy of Science: Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, and Their Importance in Islamic Studies," *Journal of Ummah Studies and Development* 7, no. 1 (2024): 72–80.

⁶ Abdul Hafid, "Methodology of Qur'anic Understanding: Various Approaches to How Mufasssirs Interpret the Qur'an," *Hamalatul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Alqur'an* 4, no. 2 (2023): 69–84.

⁷ Siti Jaroyatun Ni'mah et al., "Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology of Islamic Educational Philosophy: An Introduction," *Matan : Journal of Islam and Muslim Society* 6, no. 1 (January 31, 2024): 32.

⁸ Riky Supratama et al., "Islam as a Science: Ontology, Epistemology and Ethics," *Amorti: Jurnal Studi Islam Interdisipliner* (October 31, 2023): 200–206.

⁹ Muhamad Mas' ud, *The Great Mystery of Numbers & Figures in the Qur'an* (Jogjakarta: Laksana, 2011).

¹⁰ Suria Anisah and Fadhli Ramadhan, "Analysis Of Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology Of Balaghah Science In Arabic (A Study Of Philosophy Of Science)," *International Journal of Indonesian Philosophy & Theology* 5, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 30–37.

Tafsir In The Perspective Of Qur'anic Studies."¹¹ Nurul Islami, "The Essence and Significance of Madzhabi Tafsir Studies for Muslim Academics."¹² These studies demonstrate the significance of the foundations of ontology, epistemology, and axiology across various Islamic disciplines.¹³ Ontology explores the nature and essence of knowledge.¹⁴ Epistemology encompasses the methods and sources of knowledge.¹⁵ Axiology emphasizes the values inherent in science and its benefits for life.¹⁶

The method used is descriptive-analytical:¹⁷ This study systematically describes the various existing mazahib al-tafsir and analyzes them through the frameworks of ontology, epistemology, and axiology. The analysis will identify the distinctive features of each interpretative style, the factors that influence them, and their implications for religious understanding and practice. The primary data utilized in this study is the work of Hardivizon et al., titled "Mazahib At-Tafsir".¹⁸ Secondary data will be sourced from scientific journal articles, research papers, and other publications that discuss mazahib al-tafsir.

Data Analysis Techniques are as follows: 1) Data Reduction: Summarizing and focusing on the collected data by selecting the most relevant information related to the research questions. 2) Data Display: Presenting data in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, or charts to enhance understanding and facilitate analysis. 3) Data Interpretation: Conducting an in-depth analysis of the data to identify patterns, themes, and significant relationships. 4) Data Verification: Assessing the validity and reliability of the data by comparing information from various sources and triangulating the data. 5) Conclusion Drawing: Formulating conclusions based on the results of the data analysis, addressing the research questions, and providing recommendations for further research.

Ontological Mazahib Al-Tafsir

Mazahib is the plural form of the word Mazhab, which derives from the Arabic root meaning "the path that one walks and traverses or "the path that one aspires to follow.¹⁹ In the context of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), refers to a school of thought or understanding that is

¹¹ Sja'roni, "Madzahibut Tafsir in the Perspective of Qur'anic Studies."

¹² Nurul Islami, "The Essence and Significance of Madzhabi Tafsir Studies for Muslim Academics."

¹³ Afriandi et al., "Objects of Study in the Philosophy of Science: Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, and Their Importance in Islamic Studies."

¹⁴ Aurana Zahro El Hasbi, "Philosophy of Islamic Education (Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology) as the Foundation of Islamic Education," *Al-Furqan: Journal of Religion, Social, and Culture* 2, no. 6 (2023): 809–822.

¹⁵ Afriandi et al., "Objects of Study in the Philosophy of Science: Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, and Their Importance in Islamic Studies."

¹⁶ Dias Rafah Ramadhan, "Philosophy of Da'wah: A Study of Ontology, Epistimology, and Axiology," *Axiology: Journal of Education and Social Sciences* (2024), accessed February 10, 2025, <https://aksiologi.pubmedia.id/index.php/aksiologi/article/view/279>.

¹⁷ Sitti Hasbiah, Anwar, and Ilma Wulansari Hasdiansa, *Introduction to Business Research Methodology* (Lombok Barat: Seval Literindo Kreasi, 2024).

¹⁸ Hardivizon, Febriyarni, and Saputra, *Mazahib At-Tafsir*.

¹⁹ Luwis Ma'luf, *Al-Munjid Fi Al-Lughah Wa Al-'Alam* (Bairut: Dar Al-Masyariq, 1986).

derived from the *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) of *mujtahids*. This understanding is grounded in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith.²⁰ Meanwhile, the term in the context of Islamic theology refers to the various interpretations and schools of thought within Islam that pertain to creed (belief), faith, and divinity.²¹ The emergence of Islamic theology was a response to the political division among Muslims known as "al-fitnah al-kubra. The theological schools that developed during this period included Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, and Maturidiyyah.²² While discussing hadith, this may refer to Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Abu Dawood, and Ibn Majah. Their collective works are known as the *Kutub al-Sittah*.²³

Mazahib al-Tafsir is not a recognized school like the schools of jurisprudence or theology; rather, it refers to the various approaches and tendencies adopted by a Qur'anic mufasir (*al-Laun wa al-Ittijah*).²⁴

This term refers to the outcome of human comprehension of the Qur'ān through a specific method or approach.²⁵ In other words, the school of tafsir represents a school of thought that encompasses the results of *ijtihad*, manifested as interpretations or ideas of scholars employing specific methods and approaches. These interpretations are subsequently compiled and followed by later generations.²⁶ The term was first used by Ignaz Goldziher in his book *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung*.²⁷ In the study of tafsir science, mazahib al-tafsir examines the figures of tafsir and tafsir experts, as well as the biographies of tafsir authors, their methodologies, styles, and characteristics of interpretation. The material focus of this study is historical data in the form of tafsir works and the history of their composition from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to the present day.²⁸

In the context of tafsir, "mazahib al-tafsir" refers to the school, tendency, or methodology chosen by a Qur'anic mufasir.²⁹ This term refers to the interpretation of the Qur'an through specific methods or approaches aimed at elucidating the meanings of its verses.³⁰ In the context

²⁰ Maradingin, *Introduction to Comparative Mazhabs* (Sukabumi: farhâ pustaka, 2020), accessed February 8, 2025, <http://repository.uinsu.ac.id/8657/1/PR%20Pengantar%20Perbandingan%20Mazhab%2090hlm.pdf>.

²¹ "Schools of Islamic Theology - Indonesian Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, March 10, 2024, accessed February 17, 2025, https://id.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mazhab_tologi_Islam&oldid=25414766.

²² Hisan Mursalin, "Schools of Theology in Islam," *Rayah Al-Islam* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1737–1754.

²³ Rohasib Maulana, "Historiography of Hadith Codification," *Al-Thiqah: Journal of Islamic Sciences* 6, no. 1 (2023): 1–17.

²⁴ Khaerul Augusty, "Tafsir Riwayah And Dirayah As Mazhab In Tafsir," *Al-Tadabbur: Journal of Qur'anic Sciences and Tafsir* 7, no. 02 (2022): 247–257.

²⁵ Hardivizon, Febriyarni, and Saputra, *Mazahib At-Tafsir*.

²⁶ Thebajigurs, "Introduction to the Schools of Tafsir," *Qur'anic Studies*, October 16, 2016, accessed February 17, 2025, <https://iatbajigur.wordpress.com/2016/10/16/pengantar-mazhab-tafsir/>.

²⁷ Augusty, "Tafsir Riwayah and Dirayah as a Mazhab in Tafsir."

²⁸ Mutiur Ridho, Muhammad Ihsan, and Abdul Kholiq, "Understanding the Urgency of Madzhab Tafsir: A Thematic Analysis of Zakat, n.d., accessed February 17, 2025, <https://ihsanrajudin.blogspot.com/2017/12/makalah-tafsir-tematik-zakat.html>.

²⁹ Hardivizon, Febriyarni, and Saputra, *Mazahib At-Tafsir*.

³⁰ Augusty, "afsir Riwayah and Dirayah as a Mazhab in Tafsir."

of the science of interpretation, the style of interpretation is referred to as "*lawn al-tafsir*"³¹ In other words, "mazahib al-tafsir" refers to the outcomes of ijtihad, which encompasses the thoughts and interpretations of scholars. These interpretations are compiled and associated with specific figures, tendencies, or historical periods.³² The term was first used by Ignaz Goldziher in his book "Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung, which was later translated as *al-Tafsir al-Islami*".³³

The discussion of mazahib al-tafsir encompasses several aspects, including the following: *First*, differences in jurisprudence. Tafsir with a fiqh approach examines legal verses in a comparative manner, outlines the varying opinions of fiqh scholars regarding a specific verse, and elucidates how to derive legal rulings from Quranic verses. These differences are influenced by the fiqh methodologies employed by the mufassirs within each school.³⁴ *Second*, Differences in Theology (Aqidah): Mazahib al-Tafsir examines the impact of various schools of thought on differing interpretations.³⁵ *Third*, Patterns of Interpretation (*lawn al-tafsir*): This discussion encompasses the nuances and distinctive characteristics that influence a Qur'anic interpretation. These elements represent a form of intellectual expression by a mufassir as they elucidate the meanings of Qur'anic verses in accordance with their expertise.³⁶ The interpretative style with legal and fiqh tendencies employs the fiqh paradigm.³⁷ *Fourth*, differences in interpretation, or mujtahid interpretation, contribute to the variations in opinion among different schools of thought (mazhab). These differences arise from varying perceptions in ushul fiqh (principles of jurisprudence) and fiqh (Islamic law), as well as from distinct interpretations by mujtahids (scholars who engage in independent reasoning).³⁸

Epistemological Mazahib Al-Tafsir

The epistemology of mazahib al-tafsir is the study of how knowledge regarding Qur'anic interpretation is acquired, validated, and structured over time. This field involves analyzing the sources, methods, and validity of various interpretations, as well as the factors that influenced the development of different schools and approaches to tafsir.³⁹

³¹ Muhammad Husain al-Dzahabi, *Al-Tafsir Wa Al-Mufasssirun* (Kairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Hadithah, 1962).

³² Zainal Abidin, "Interpretation of Madhhab Paper: "Definition, Area of Study, and Significance," 2015, accessed February 8, 2025, <https://ilmu-alquran-tafsir.blogspot.com/2017/01/makalah-madhab-tafsir-pengertian.html>.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Arif Zunzul Maizal, "Tafsir Fikih in the Khazanah of Quranic Interpretation," *Juris (Sharia Scientific Journal)*. 19, no. 1 (2020): 123–132.

³⁵ Ahmad Atabik, "The Influence of Mufassir's Mazhab on Differences in Interpretation," *Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 2, no. 1 (2017): 55–77.

³⁶ Maizal, "Tafsir Fikih in the Khazanah of Quranic Interpretation."

³⁷ Hardivizon, Febriyarni, and Saputra, *Mazahib At-Tafsir*.

³⁸ Nanang Abdillah, "Madhhabs and Factors Causing Differences," *Fikroh* 8, no. 1 (2014): 292400.

³⁹ A. Fauzi, "Epistemology of Medieval Tafsir: A Study of Al-Qurtubi's Tafsir Al-Jami'Li Ahkam Al-Qur'an" (Master's Thesis, Graduate School of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2021), accessed February 8, 2025, <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/58891>.

Validated Interpretation of the Prophet

Dozan Wely and Muhammad Turmuzi argue that the Prophet's interpretation is not confined to Qouli traditions; rather, it also encompasses fi'ili and takriri traditions, which are considered integral to the Prophet's interpretation of the Qur'an.⁴⁰ For example, in QS. Al-Baqarah: 43, the interpretation provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs emphasizes the importance of performing prayer according to the method taught by the Prophet, as illustrated in the following quote:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

43. And be steadfast in prayer; practice regular charity; and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship).

صَلَاةُ الْجَمَاعَةِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ صَلَاةِ الْفَذِّ بِسَبْعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ دَرَجَةً (رواه البخاري ومسلم⁴¹)

"Praying in congregation is superior by twenty-seven degrees compared to praying alone (narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim). We understand that prayer in Islam involves various physical movements, such as bowing, prostration, and tithing. However, at the conclusion of this verse, prayer is solely referred to as with the manner prescribed by Islamic law as taught by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), rather than in the way they previously prayed without bowing (Al-Baqarah 2:43).

Implicitly, the explanation above demonstrates that every aspect of the Prophet's life—his words, actions, and even his silence—serves as an authentic interpretation of the Qur'an. Therefore, these elements should be regarded as essential guidelines for Muslims.

Interpretation during the time of the Prophet was notably diverse, as the Companions had varying understandings of Qur'anic verses. For instance, a man vowed not to have intercourse with his wife until "a time" (حين). Uncertain about the duration of his vow, he sought a fatwa from the Prophet's companions. The Prophet instructed him to consult them. Abu Bakr interpreted حين as forever, Umar as 40 years, Uthman as one year, and Ali as one day and one night. The man then returned to the Prophet to report the differing opinions. The Prophet summoned the Companions and requested evidence for their interpretations: Abu Bakr based his answer on Qur'an Surah As-Saffat, verse 148; Umar based his on Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 25; Uthman referenced Qur'an Surah Ibrahim, verse 25; and Ali cited Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah. The Prophet remarked that his companions are like stars; whoever is followed will be guided, and he advised the man to adhere to Ali's opinion to ease his burden.⁴²

⁴⁰ Dozan Wely and Muhamad Turmuzi, *History of Qur'anic Interpretation Methodology (Theory, Application, and Interpretation Model)* (Yogyakarta: Bintang Pustaka, 2020).

⁴¹ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīrah al-Ja'fī al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī (al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar Min Umūr Rasūl Allāh - Ṣallā Allāhu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam - Wa Sunnatihī Wa Ayyāmihī)* (Kairo: Dār al-Ta'wīl, 2012).

⁴² Kompasiana.com, "Tracing a Meaning of Hiinun," *Kompasiana*, last modified October 1, 2016, accessed February 17, 2025, <https://www.kompasiana.com/zadiahmad/57eeef94147b61570ca1e0ed/melacak-sebuah-makna>.

This story highlights several important points regarding interpretation and the diversity of opinion among the Prophet's companions: 1. Flexibility of Language and Interpretation: The Arabic word (حين) has a broad and non-specific meaning, allowing for various interpretations. This demonstrates that the understanding of a text, in this case, the oath, can differ based on individual perspectives and insights. 2. Use of the Qur'an as a Source of Interpretation: Each companion based his interpretation on different Qur'anic verses. This illustrates that the Qur'an is the primary source of law and guidance in Islam and can be utilized to address various issues. 3. Validity of Differences of Opinion: Differences of opinion among the companions are natural and accepted. The Prophet did not blame any of them but acknowledged that each had their own basis and validity. This underscores the importance of respecting differing opinions in Islam. 4. Ijtihad and Competence: This story also emphasizes the significance of ijtihad (the earnest effort to understand and interpret Islamic law) for those who possess the requisite knowledge. The companions who issued fatwas were individuals with a deep understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah, enabling them to provide interpretations grounded in sound evidence.

The Evolution of Interpretation over Time

The interpretation of the Qur'an has evolved over time, beginning with the era of the Prophet Muhammad and continuing into the contemporary period. Broadly speaking, the development of tafsir can be categorized into several distinct phases or periods.⁴³

1. The Time of the Prophet Muhammad: During this period, the Prophet Muhammad served as the primary interpreter of the Qur'an. His interpretations aimed to clarify the meanings of the Qur'anic verses for the sahaba.⁴⁴

2. The Period of the Companions: Following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the Companions continued to interpret the Qur'an. They based their interpretations on their direct understanding from the Prophet, as well as through ijtihad (reasoned judgment) when there was no direct interpretation available from him.⁴⁵

3. Tabi'in period, various schools of tafsir emerged in regions such as Makkah, Madinah, and Iraq. The Tabi'in learned tafsir from the Companions and developed their own methods of interpretation.⁴⁶

4. Period of Codification (Bookkeeping): This period commenced at the end of the Umayyad dynasty and the beginning of the Abbasid era. During this time, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad began to be systematically codified into distinct chapters.⁴⁷ Interpretations of the

⁴³ Abdul Manaf, "The History of the Development of Tafsir," *Tafakkur : Journal of Qur'anic Sciences and Tafsir* 1, no. 2 (April 30, 2021): 148–159.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Wildan Faqih, "History of the Development of Qur'anic Interpretation," *Journal of Education Research* 5, no. 2 (May 11, 2024): 1832–1843.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Bola.com, "Meaning of Qur'anic Tafsir and History of Its Development," *bola.com*, August 14, 2023, accessed February 17, 2025, <https://www.bola.com/ragam/read/5370110/arti-tafsir-al-quran-beserta-sejarah-perkembangannya>.

Qur'an began to be written and documented.⁴⁸ Muhammad al-Zahabi divided this phase into three periods: the development of interpretation during the time of the Prophet and his companions, the development of interpretation during the Tabi'in period, and the development of interpretation during the period of compilation and codification, which began in the Abbasid era and continues to contemporary times.⁴⁹ During this period, scholarly works on tafsir emerged. Tafsir bil ma'tsur and tafsir bir ra'yi have continued to evolve over time.⁵⁰

5. Middle Ages: The Middle Ages represent a significant era in the historical development of tafsir, spanning from the 9th century AD to the 19th century AD. During this period, there was a transition from naqli (historically based) to aqli (reason-based) interpretations, shifting from tafsir bil ma'tsur to tafsir bil ra'yi. One notable aspect of this development is linguistic or lughawi tafsir, which interprets the Qur'an in light of contemporary language trends.⁵¹

6. Contemporary Period: During this time, Qur'anic interpretation continues to evolve with the introduction of new methods and approaches.⁵² It is also influenced by contemporary social, political, and cultural contexts.⁵³

In general, the evolution of Qur'anic interpretation reflects the dynamics and developments in understanding and interpreting the Qur'an throughout Islamic history. The methods of Qur'anic interpretation have also evolved over time. Furthermore, the development of interpretative styles is influenced by various internal and external factors.

The Influence of Internal Factors on the Style and Flow of Tafsir, Among Others:

1. The objective conditions of the Qur'anic text permit diverse interpretations. Numerous works of Qur'anic literature indicate that the Qur'an was revealed in multiple recitations, referred to in hadith as Sab'ah Ahruf (seven recitations/qira'at). This led to the development of several schools of reading, which have significantly influenced the interpretation of the Qur'an.⁵⁴

2. The objective nature of the words in the Qur'an permits a range of interpretations, as it is common for a single word to possess multiple meanings, both haqiqi (literal) and majazi (metaphorical). For instance, the term "lamasa" in Surah al-Nisa' verse 43 can signify "touching"

⁴⁸ M. Yanis Saputra, "The History of the Development of Qur'anic Interpretation Methods from Time to Time Until the Emergence of the Al-Azhar Tafsir Book (Study of Buya Hamka's Thought)" (Thesis, IAIN Bukittinggi and PA Judge, 2021), accessed February 17, 2025, <https://www.pa-maninjau.go.id/berita/artikel/502-sejarah-perkembangan-metode-penafsiran-al-qur-an-dari-masa-ke-masa-hingga-munculnya-kitab-tafsir-al-azhar-studi-pemikiran-buya-hamka>.

⁴⁹ Manaf, "History of the Development of Tafsir."

⁵⁰ Saputra, "The History of the Development of Al-Qur'an Interpretation Methods from Time to Time Until the Emergence of the Al-Azhar Tafsir Book (Study of Buya Hamka's Thought)."

⁵¹ Tasya Putri Nurhayat and Edi Komarudin, "The Development of Qur'anic Interpretation in the Middle Ages," *Mashadiruna Journal of Qur'anic Science and Interpretation*. 3, no. 2 (2024): 115–120.

⁵² Faqih, "History of the Development of Qur'anic Interpretation."

⁵³ Saputra, "The History of the Development of Al-Qur'an Interpretation Methods from Time to Time Until the Emergence of the Al-Azhar Tafsir Book (Study of Buya Hamka's Thought)."

⁵⁴ Desri Nengsih, "Ahruf Sab'ah and Qiro'at Sab'ah as Disciplines of Quranic Science," *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 5, no. 01 (June 22, 2020): 19–40.

according to the Shafi'i school of thought, while it can denote "intercourse" in the Hanafi school of thought.⁵⁵

3. The ambiguity of meaning in the Qur'ān arises from the presence of musytarak (words with multiple meanings). For instance, the term in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 228, is interpreted in different ways: it can signify "purity" according to the Shafi'i school, or "menstruation" according to the Hanafi school.⁵⁶

4. Sects or groups that formed due to political issues, such as the caliphate or state leadership (imamate), are classified as political factions or sects. For instance, the Shia community emerged from dissatisfaction with the prevailing conditions, particularly the fact that the caliphate was not held by Ali bin Abi Talib. They insisted that the caliphate should be led by Ali and his descendants. This political factor subsequently influenced the development of tafsir styles and interpretations within Shi'ah Islam.⁵⁷

5. In contrast to the schools that emerged due to political factors, there are also schools of Islamic theology that exist solely based on matters of belief, rather than practical political interests. The Mu'tazilah school, for example, arose as a response to explain and defend the truth of Islamic beliefs against the attacks and distortions from other groups. From this foundation, the Mu'tazilah interpretation (tafsir I'tizali) was developed, including works such as Tafsir al-Kasysyaf by Imam al-Zamakhshari.⁵⁸

6. The expertise and depth of knowledge possessed by a mufasir can significantly influence their understanding of the Qur'an. Mufasirs often interpret the Qur'an in accordance with their specific disciplines. Consequently, although the subject of study remains the same—the Qur'an—the outcomes of the interpretations can differ. This phenomenon accounts for the emergence of various styles and schools of interpretation throughout the history of Islamic thought. For instance, scientific tafsir is developed by mufasirs who are well-versed in scientific fields and interpret verses of the Qur'an through scientific methodologies.⁵⁹

The Influence of External Factors on the Style and Flow of Tafsir, Among Others:

1. Encounters with Other Civilizations: The school of tafsir was significantly influenced by the interactions between the Islamic world and various civilizations outside of Islam, including the Greeks, Persians, Romans, and Western cultures. The translation of Greek scientific texts into Arabic commenced during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ M. Aswadi Syukur, *Comparison of Mazhabs* (Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1994), accessed February 8, 2025, http://opac.uinfabengkulu.ac.id/index.php?p=show_detail&id=11501&keywords=.

⁵⁶ T.M.Hasbi ash-Shiddigi, *Comparative Science of Madhhabs* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975).

⁵⁷ Khoirul Muhtadi, "Deradicalization of Wahabi-Shi'ah Politics in the Context of Indonesian Madhhab Tafsir," *Syariat: Journal of Qur'anic and Legal Studies* 1, no. 02 (November 1, 2015): 249–258.

⁵⁸ Opin Rahman and M. Gazali Rahman, "Interpretation of Ideology: Idiological Bias in Sunni, Muktazilah, and Shia Theological Interpretations," *As-Syams*. 1, no. 2 (2020): 154–196.

⁵⁹ Rubini Rubini, "Tafsir 'Ilmi," *Al-Manar: Journal of Islamic Communication and Education* 5, no. 2 (2016), accessed February 8, 2025, <http://www.jurnal.stainsyk.ac.id/index.php/almanar/article/view/37>.

⁶⁰ Hardivizon, Febriyarni, and Saputra, *Mazahib At-Tafsir*.

2. The development of modern science and knowledge is an external factor that influences Qur'anic interpretation. Scientific interpretation (tafsir 'ilmy) emerged as an effort to reconcile the teachings of Islam with advancements in civilization in the broader world.⁶¹ Tafsir 'Ilmi is a method of interpretation characterized by a mufasssir who possesses expertise in scientific fields and aims to interpret verses of the Qur'an through a scientific lens.⁶²

Axiological Mazahib al-Tafsir

The madzahib al-tafsir tradition arises from a diverse range of approaches to the interpretation of the Qur'an.⁶³ Studying the schools of Qur'anic exegesis (madzahib al-tafsir) is essential for those who wish to deepen their understanding of the science of interpretation. The different streams of Qur'anic interpretation represent a variety of interpretative styles.⁶⁴ Here are some key points regarding the axiological significance in the study of madzahib al-tafsir.:

1. Avoiding Taqdis al-Afkar al-Diniyyah: The study of madzhabut tafsir is essential to prevent the sacralization of religious thought, including the sacralization of one's interpretation of the Qur'an.

2. Understanding the Evolution of Interpretation: For Muslims, knowledge of history—particularly the history of past generations—offers a more comprehensive understanding of how the Qur'ān has been interpreted over time.

3. Discourse Development. The study of mazahib al-tafsir aims to foster a discourse on the significance of respecting plurality in the interpretation of Qur'anic verses, particularly those pertaining to differences in theological madhhabs. This approach seeks to prevent the taqdis al-fikr al-diniy (sacralization of religious thought) and promote the realization of religious moderation.

Axiology is a branch of philosophy that examines values, including ethics and aesthetics. In this context, axiology in mazahib al-tafsir focuses on the values that underpin Qur'anic interpretation, such as theological, philosophical, social, and cultural values. By understanding these values, we can gain deeper insights into why mufasssirs interpret the Qur'ān in various ways.⁶⁵

Conclusion

Mazahib al-Tafsir as a School of Thought: Mazahib al-Tafsir refers to the various schools of thought or interpretive tendencies adopted by a mufasssir in understanding and interpreting the

⁶¹ Ali Akbar, "The Contribution of Scientific Theory to Interpretation," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 23, no. 1 (2015): 31–45.

⁶² Darma Syahputra Hasibuan, "Pre-Islamic Civilization and Its Influence on Islamic Education," *Edu-Riligia: Journal of Islamic Education and Religious Sciences* 6, no. 3 (October 31, 2022), accessed February 9, 2025, <http://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/eduriligia/article/view/13175>.

⁶³ Abdul Djalal H., *The Urgency of Maudhu'i Interpretation Today* (Kalam Mulia, 1990), accessed February 8, 2025, http://perpustakaanlajnah.kemenag.go.id%2Fhome%2Findex.php%3Fp%3Dshow_detail%26id%3D243%26keywords%3D

⁶⁴ Sja'roni, "Madzhabut Tafsir in the Perspective of Qur'anic Studies."

⁶⁵ Eman Suherman and Khairul Katsirin, "The Style and Logic of At-Thabari's Interpretation in Jāmi'ul Bayān 'an Ta'Wilil Qur'ān," *Religious Action* 1, no. 1 (2023): 35–45.

Qur'an through specific methods and approaches. These schools emerge from differences in jurisprudence, theology (creed), interpretive style, and the interpretations of mujtahids.

Epistemology of Mazahib al-Tafsir: The evolution of Qur'anic interpretation is a dynamic process that has developed from the time of the Prophet to the modern era. This evolution has been influenced by various internal factors, such as the diversity of Qur'anic languages, differences in readings, ambiguities in meaning, and prevailing political and theological currents. Additionally, external factors, including contact with other civilizations and advancements in science, have played a significant role. These influences have given rise to a variety of styles and schools of tafsir, ranging from tafsir bil Ma'tsur to tafsir bir Ra'yi, as well as scientific tafsir. This reflects the ongoing efforts to understand and apply the Qur'ān in ever-changing contexts.

Axiology of Mazahib al-Tafsir: The study of Mazahib al-Tafsir holds significant value in preventing the sacralization of religious thought (taqdis al-afkar al-diniyyah), understanding the historical development of Qur'anic interpretation, and fostering a discourse on the importance of respecting pluralism in interpretation. The axiology within Mazahib al-Tafsir is connected to the theological, philosophical, social, and cultural values that underpin the interpretation of the Qur'an.

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